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REVIEWS

Fundamentals of Spanish Grammar, by Alice Huntington Bushee. Benj. H. Sanborn & Co., Boston, 1917. 8vo, xii + 124 pp.

Miss Bushee has written an extremely original and readable textbook in her *Fundamentals of Spanish Grammar*. There is nothing quite like it in modern language grammars published in this country. It is refreshing for the jaded reviewer to find a grammar which has departed from the oft-beaten track. This grammar is based on the deductive method. We have had grammars of that type before, but in them the deductions are printed for those who do not care to take the trouble to deduce, and for those who wish to verify their deductions. Not so with Miss Bushee's grammar. He who deduces not, learns not. Now who shall say that this is not exactly the kind of textbook that the American student needs? He has been fed so long on the doctrines of "make it easy for the learner" and "play while you work" that he will not open his mouth to catch the fruit dropping from the tree of knowledge as he lies on his back. This grammar forces the student to think for himself. Therefore it will not be a best seller. Furthermore, it presupposes a thorough knowledge of Spanish on the part of the instructor, and so teachers of Spanish will be chary of using such a book.

The *Fundamentals of Spanish Grammar*, to quote from the preface, "is intended primarily for students who are already acquainted with one or more foreign languages, i. e., those in colleges which require a language for admission and in summer schools where it is desirable to finish the grammar in a few weeks." It seems to me, however, that it would be pretty hard sledding for the student who has studied German but has not studied either Latin or French to get anywhere with this book. As a matter of fact, it would be absolutely essential to have studied Latin and French. Without these two languages the student would be completely at sea. The grammar contains twenty-five lessons, but five of them being reviews, we have actually only twenty in which grammar and syntax are explained or deduced.

For a book of its size, one hundred and twenty-four pages, the introduction on pronunciation is fairly complete, and Miss Bushee insists throughout the text on the necessity of correct pronunciation. It is difficult to understand, however, why the author should ask repeatedly for the reason of the change of *z* to *c* before *e* and *i*. This is one of the very few inconsistencies in Spanish orthography and cannot be explained by the rule that "*z* has the voiceless *th* sound before *a*, *o*, *u*, before consonants and at the end of a word." That rule does not explain the pronunciation of the letter *zeda* itself which the author gives, and the two or three pages of proper names in Zerolo that begin with *ze* or *si*. Nor does it explain the pronunciation of the name of the author of that standard dictionary, a name which must often be men-

tioned in Spanish classes. I do not understand what is meant by the statement that *r* in *comer* is similar to trilled *r* in *there*, not like the *r* in *father*, there being no *r* in either word unless followed by a vowel in my pronunciation. Miss Bushee makes no mention of the pronunciation of intervocalic *g* and *gu* before vowels. This sound is not a stop like *g* in *got*, it is a spirant. As a matter of fact, *g* before *u* has entirely disappeared in parts of Spain and in some Spanish American countries.

One is amazed at the amount of grammar that has been crammed into this little book. It is by no means a quack teacher's "Spanish at a glance." From the very outset the author cautions the student to "learn every Spanish word by heart and to work out the exact meaning of every phrase and idiom." "It is not the time," she wisely remarks, "for getting a general idea or for rapid reading." It is rather a jolt to the woodenly-minded college professor to find the subjunctive treated in the second lesson, but the presupposed linguistic training of the student should dispel any unfavorable criticism on that point.

How does Miss Bushee teach grammar and syntax? Let us take the first lesson as a model. After giving the infinitive, present indicative, and imperative forms of the three regular conjugations and *ser*, without translations, but with a few questions and observations, twenty-five Spanish phrases are placed before the student. He will then "read and determine the meaning, looking up as few words as possible." There are no vocabularies in the lessons. He is then asked: "What are the four forms of the definite article? Gender and number of each? Note the contraction with *de* (sentence 10 but not 9)." The student then deduces the answers from the model sentences. The average American student accustomed to having his knowledge carefully prededuced and handed out to him attractively garnished on a platter will flee from methods like these as from a pest. You can "call spirits from the vasty deep. . . . But will they come when you do call for them?" Let us suppose, for instance, that I am a good student of Latin and German. The first lesson seems to be concerned with gender. I have deduced the masculine and feminine forms of the definite and indefinite article. I search in vain for a neuter gender. I must finally deduce from silence on the subject that Spanish has no neuter. In this first lesson then, in addition to the articles, the contraction of *de* and *el*, the gender of nouns and adjectives, the student will learn by deductions and notes the formation of the plurals of nouns and adjectives and agreement of the same, the use of possessive expressions, and the substitution of the article for the possessive pronoun with parts of the body. There follows an exercise of fourteen short sentences, followed by a request to write original sentences illustrating the grammatical points taken up in the lesson. How is it humanly possible for a student without any feeling at all for the language, and with a knowledge acquired by the deductions in one lesson, to write original sentences? Some of us do not permit students in the first stages of their study to put English phrases into the foreign language!

The verb is made the pivotal point about which each lesson is centered.

And rightly. To one who has mastered Latin and French, the verb is the key to a knowledge of Spanish. Every lesson contains either some forms of the regular conjugations or all the forms of one or more irregular verbs, grouped in an excellent manner.

It is only fair to state that all rules are not learned by the deductive method. Some peculiarly Spanish difficulties are carefully analyzed. For example, the difference between *ser* and *estar* is very clearly explained. It is evident, however, that this book can not be used as a reference text. Its use must be restricted to that of a drill book for graduate students or summer school teachers who wish to acquire a reading knowledge of Spanish. To these two classes of students the *Fundamentals of Spanish Grammar* can be heartily recommended. There is much danger, however, that the grammar will be used by only too many prospective teachers of Spanish who desire a short cut to that tongue. Most of our teachers who study Spanish at summer schools are not doing so in order to be able to read Cervantes and Calderón.

Miss Bushee's Spanish is correct and idiomatic. In the main she uses connected narratives and dialogues which tend to make the student think in Spanish. It seems to me that such meaningless phrases as "Un libro es una gramática española," and such unidiomatic structures as "Es un niño bueno," and "Su lengua es hablada en muchos países" mar the book. Again, why waste time and effort with drill sentences on *tú* and *vosotros*, forms which the student will rarely, perhaps never, use? The instructor who uses Miss Bushee's book must be an expert, for when the student finds difficulty in making his deduction the rule must be accurately supplied. It is virtually a teacher's notebook. It is really more an interrogative than a positive textbook. It presupposes a sort of *estudiante autodidáctico*, a student who is willing to think and investigate for himself. Are there enough superstudents of this kind in the United States to warrant the publication of this unique grammar? The book used by Miss Bushee herself probably gives good results with graduate students. She lays great stress on memory, and insists that words and phrases be memorized. It is a pity that the book cannot be used by the vast multitude of students of Spanish in high schools and colleges who need to be taught to think for themselves, and that in learning a language memory plays the most important part.

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Manual de Correspondencia, by Ventura Fuentes and Alfredo Elías. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1918. xi + 230 pp.

The book does not confine itself to commercial correspondence. Social correspondence has its allotment of space. The introductory part of the text, as in the case of Luria's book, is a dissertation in Spanish upon the composition of a letter. Then follow the Spanish letters, fifty-six in number, twelve of which are purely social. At the end of each letter are copious